CITIZANS
We Can
Do Better.

About CITIZANS

Shared Aspirations and Shared Values

What we identify as priorities and proposals assumes the shared aspirations and shared values below.

Shared Aspirations:

1. **A Safe, Fair, and Prosperous Society for All**

   South Africa's success hinges on creating a fair and prosperous home for every citizen. While we can't erase our historical challenges, our primary goal is a society where all South Africans feel a sense of belonging and ownership.

2. **A Beacon of Courage and Creativity to the World**

   We are a resilient people; made of true grit. We don't have to conform; we can chart our own path in the interest of our society. Let's reclaim our global position as a small nation that packs a punch in the global economy, innovation, creativity, sports, peace efforts, and geopolitics.

Shared Values:

1. **Accountability**

   There is no one coming to save us: it will take each of us playing out part to build a better South Africa. We should reward contribution, and stop handouts.

2. **Transparency**

   To improve governance, we need to aim for the highest level of transparency on aspects with impact of state functions.

The 7 Priorities

We have identified what we consider to be the 7 key priorities for a better South Africa. While the identified priorities don't encompass every issue, they tackle systemic problems that, if resolved, can have a far-reaching positive impact.

We believe that if the identified issues are not meaningfully addressed by 2035, the country will likely face civil anarchy, the recovery from which will take up to 2075 at a minimum.

Our proposals under each of these priorities are rooted in our vision of a safe, just, and prosperous society, and our aspiration for South Africa to be a global symbol of courage and creativity. These proposals are also guided by our core values of solidarity and accountability.

The list of priority areas are as follows:

- War on crime and looting
- Transforming Society
- Entrenching Good Governance
- Fixing Education and Training
- Growing Economy
- Embracing Digital Evolution, and
- Additional sources of state funding

1. War on crime and looting

Crime remains a significant challenge in our society, with complex causes. While poverty and unemployment are some of the contributing factors, contact crime in South Africa tends to be more violent than in countries in similar or even worse circumstances; the result of a combination of a very violent past and current broken policing and justice system.

Addressing the crime scourge requires multifaceted approach, including tackling the trauma caused by violence, plus other social interventions like education and economic growth.

Looting, whether in the public or private sector, exacerbates this challenge. We distinguish looting from corruption because looting represents an extreme form of pillaging the country for personal gain, way beyond the common issues of corruption found worldwide.

Proposals Overview:

- **Reduce prisoner benefits**

  It is concerning that the living conditions of many law-abiding citizens pale in comparison to those of prisoners. South Africa spends approximately R15,000 per month per prisoner, including R500 for food, while many innocent unemployed South Africans rely on a mere R350 monthly grant. Stricter conditions should be in place for prisoners to earn their benefits, and we should look to reduce the benefits e.g. we need not fund prisoner degree studies, or offer 3 meals when many honest South Africans go hungry.

- **Introduce cash spend limit**

  Introducing a cash spend limit of R5000 per transaction as a start will go a long way towards limiting illicit flow of funds and laundering proceeds of crime, a material part of which is facilitated in cash to avoid traceability.

- **Harsher penalties for employing illegal foreigners**

  It is perhaps a reflection of the political mess we are in that the issue of illegal immigrants has become a political debate. At the risk of stating what should be obvious: as a country we should welcome anyone who is in our country legally and abide by our laws. Porous borders are a governance issue we need to solve for using our citizen powers, which include voting for change in government. Another significant factor contributing to the challenge of illegal immigration is the unlawful employment of illegal immigrants, largely for exploitation given their limited legal protection. This criminal act demands stricter penalties e.g. up to 12 months jail term.

- **Improve whistleblower protection and rewards**

  Whistleblowers face undue risks due to corruption issues which extend to law enforcement agencies. We need to do more to protect whistleblowers, including using private protection services. Rewards for whistleblowing must be material e.g. 10% of fund recovered.

- **Rebuild law enforcement and justice capacity**

  We need to revise entry requirements and implement stricter qualifying criteria for law enforcement jobs. In addition, we should enforce routine vetting of law enforcement officers. We also need to build financial crimes combating capacity to focus on corruption and looting in both public and private sectors, and the illicit financial flows and commodities smuggling.

2. Transforming Society

South Africa continues to grapple with the enduring legacy of historical injustices and marginalisation, the lasting consequences can be seen in land ownership, workplace transformation, spatial planning, and cultural and linguistic development. While our aspiration is for a future where social justice interventions are no longer necessary; our starting point given history requires social justice interventions.

Proposals Overview:

- **Land Reform**

  The question of land distribution stands as one of the foremost political challenges in our society, deeply intertwined with our history as a country. Land, being a finite and shared natural resource, should serve for the collective welfare of our society. We believe that the intense political debate surrounding this issue is often as a distraction from fundamental governance failures. To address this, we need to develop a comprehensive land use plan that encompasses not only land use but also considers shoreline property development (Cities like Dubai have demonstrated the feasibility of expanding into the sea if necessary).

  The plan should involve rezoning areas for various purposes, establishing guidelines for optimal space utilisation in each zone, and implementing a Land Tax for suboptimal land use. In addition, we propose the introduction of a Land Tax on domestic properties exceeding 5000 square meters. Foreign land ownership should not be allowed. Where occupied land is required for other use, expropriation of land will require payment by the state. The state however typically overpays for land, and to address this issue we propose implementing regulating land prices for expropriation purposes. This would also discourage land acquisition for speculation purposes.

  Our proposal is to set a land price formula for expropriation purposes, which is the lower of either the market value, or the last cost of purchase. Any additions to land should be at replacement value.

- **Language and Culture**

  While South has wide language diversity, there has been limited progress in the development of other official languages beyond the two historical official language, namely English and Afrikaans. Furthermore, the list of official languages does not encompass all the languages spoken in South Africa. While we deeply respect the significance of languages as carriers of culture, there has not been much progress on development of the other official languages.

  In practice, many documents in South Africa, including government gazettes, laws, and medication information leaflets, continue to be predominantly available only in English and Afrikaans. The two historic official languages also tend to be the default options in schools.

We propose that English be designated as the sole medium of instruction from grade 8 onwards and the language for business purposes. All other languages should be categorised as national languages , preserving their cultural significance but not mandating their inclusion in the compulsory academic curriculum.

- **Diversity in the workplace**

  We endorse the necessity of quotas as a temporary measure to foster diversity in the workplace. It is regrettable that the pursuit of diversity has, at times, resulted in the appointment of unqualified individuals to positions they are ill-suited for. However, we firmly believe that there is a pool of skilled South Africans available to achieve genuine diversity. We must also question the significant racial imbalances in government departments (many of which are entirely black) if we genuinely value diversity.

  Diversity is essential for the future generations: it is important for every child to have role models who resemble them to inspire the belief that they too can pursue their dreams. To ensure commitment to diversity, we advocate for substantial penalties for failing to meet diversity targets, e.g. 20% of profit

- **Social Security**

  While we endorse the concept of social security, we do not support unconditional grants for working-age citizens who are able to work. Our proposal is to replace the existing R350 grant for unemployed working-age citizens with a R1500 allowance, aligned with the lower-bound poverty line. However, this allowance should be contingent upon certain conditions, including committing to 60 hours of monthly community work and engaging in upskilling efforts.

  For partial funding of this allowance, we propose discontinuing the child support grant (excluding special categories like orphans). The primary responsibility of raising children rests with parents, and parents without a source of income can utilise the earned allowance to support their children's needs. This approach would also ensure that individuals without children have additional resources available for personal development and use.

3. Entrenching Good Go

At the heart of many socio-economic challenges in South Africa lies poor governance, further aggravated by an excess of government layers and appointments driven by political patronage.

Proposals Overview:

- **Reduce political layers**

  South Africa's government model is disproportionately expensive for the country's size, largely driven by the result of accommodating as many political loyalists as possible. Over time, the three tiers of government (national, provincial, and local) have led to inflated duplicated costs and the perpetuation of political patronage. Our proposal entails the elimination of the provincial and local government political layers, replacing them with a professionalised public service and administration layer where necessary. This shift would facilitate the allocation of skills across different regions based on need, enabling professionals like town planners and engineers to work in regions where their expertise is required, rather than being constrained by separate political jurisdictions.

  Additionally, we advocate for a reduction in the number of ministries, consolidating them into 12 clusters from the current 30: Education, Economy, Natural Resources, Infrastructure, Security, Sovereign Affairs and Relations, Public Services, Public Administration, Social Services, Digital and Data Services, Treasury, and Presidency. Furthermore, we recommend the elimination of deputy minister roles, in favour of suitably qualified bureaucrats to carry out departmental responsibilities.

- **Professionalise Public Service**

  The administrative branch of government has been significantly hindered by political interference. Professionalising the public service is essential to attract skilled professionals. Our proposal involves a comprehensive review of the capacity and skill requirements for various levels of the public service. This includes creating new grades for both existing qualified public servants and new recruits. Individuals who do not meet the revised requirements will be encouraged to upskill, and if necessary, headcount reduction will occur through natural attrition. To attract and retain top talent, salaries and incentives for these new grades should be competitive with the private sector and linked to performance, ensuring that excellence is rewarded and maintained.

- **Consolidate/integrate public service systems**

  We must streamline and eliminate the inefficiencies stemming from the proliferation of provincial and local government systems, such as licensing processes, by consolidating them into a unified national system. Currently, it is illogical to have multiple jurisdictions addressing identical challenges in municipal billing and

redundant investments in licensing systems as two examples. Furthermore, there is a critical need to enhance interdepartmental integration to ensure seamless collaboration and information sharing across various government functions

- **Introduce limited veto powers for developmental**

  South Africa operates as a constitutional democracy, the role of the courts in governing the country is pivotal. However, court processes can be vulnerable to abuse, resulting in prolonged delays of key developmental projects. While leaving adjudication to the courts remains crucial, these delays often impede economic and social transformation initiatives and leave the country vulnerable to sabotage from unknown backers. Our proposal involves introducing presidential veto powers to expedite decisions on economic and development opportunities delayed by more than six months due to court processes. To mitigate the risk of abuse, if the president exercises veto powers to greenlight specific initiatives, such decisions should still require ratification by a two-thirds majority in parliament

- **Extend political party funding disclosure requirement to NGOs**

  While NGOs undoubtedly play a significant and important role in South Africa, there is a potential risk associated with certain organizations being exploited by undisclosed funders to undermine developmental projects. To address this concern, we propose that political party funding disclosure requirements should be extended to NGOs.

4. Growing Economy

A growing economy is precondition for prosperity and social progress: it leads opportunities for job creation, poverty reduction, and enhanced social services. A robust economy fosters stability, attracts investments, and empowers individuals and communities to thrive. Thus, focusing on the economy must remain one of our highest priorities to secure a brighter future for all South Africans.

Proposals Overview:

- **Energy Security**

  The current electricity crisis is least about choices between renewable and non-renewable energy sources; it fundamentally boils down to looting and poor governance. In the long term, South Africa requires an optimal energy mix that strikes a balance between sustainability and affordability. While an increased reliance on renewable sources is a commendable goal, it must be achieved at a

rate we can afford, carefully considering the socio-economic implications of the transition. Given our developmental needs, it is likely that our energy transition to more renewable energy sources will for practical reasons take longer to achieve. Ensuring that energy is accessible at the lowest possible cost necessitates one of two approaches, or a combination: state production of energy, and/or private sector involvement with regulated pricing. This strategy not only safeguards the economy but also guarantees that energy remains affordable and accessible to all segments of society.

- **Food Security**

  Geopolitical events like the war in Ukraine have underscored how global supply chain disruptions can impact basic food security. These constraints have driven up food prices in South Africa, a nation with strong agricultural potential that should ideally enjoy food security and independence. Furthermore, these global supply issues have revealed another challenge: even when products are produced in South Africa, prices are adjusted to international parity, and local suppliers choose to export goods even when there are shortages within the country. To address these concerns, we must establish a robust food security and independence plan. This plan should encompass support for local farmers, the implementation of food export duties on specific food items, and where necessary, imposition of local supply requirements on specific food items before allowing exports.

- **The role of a developmental state in the economy**

  While we endorse free market principles in competitive sectors, we recognise the importance of state intervention in areas where there is market failure and/or limited competition, as this can lead to undue burden on society. Given our current context, we see the state playing the following roles, solely or in partnership with private sector:

  - Ultimate ownership and stewardship of natural resources.
  - Developing high-cost low return critical infrastructure
  - Investment in emerging sectors with potential societal benefits.
  - Regulation to ensure affordability of essential goods and services.

  This measured state involvement aims to strike a balance between market dynamics and the well-being of the broader population, safeguarding both individual freedoms and collective interests.

- **Create business friendly environment**

  Investors and business owners demand a degree of policy certainty to thrive. Currently, South Africa's investment environment is less stable than even some war-torn nations, largely due to ongoing policy uncertainties and burdensome bureaucratic processes. To foster a more business-friendly atmosphere, we propose a multifaceted approach:

  - Establishment of long-term sector plans extending 20 years or more.
  - Reduction in the cost of regulatory compliance
  - No income tax for small businesses with taxable incomes up to R5,000,000
  - Developmental finance for small businesses, with first loss taken by state
  - Implementation of long-term public service wage increase agreements to provide stability, such as a 4% annual increase until 2035.

  These measures aim to instill investor confidence, stimulate economic growth, and nurture a more conducive environment for businesses to flourish.

- **Economic Transformation**

  economic inequalities remain a pressing issue in South Africa, with slow and often poorly executed transformation efforts. The existing BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) legislation has fallen short of achieving its intended goals, primarily benefiting a select few with political connections. We advocate for a fundamental shift in approach: replacing BEE laws with a robust Economic Tranformation policy for all South Africans, with special focus on state procurement and Enterprise and Supplier Development.
  The new policy framework should be benefit all South Africans in line with the country's demographic composition; it cannot be at the exclusion of other South Africans.
  We also propose an innovative approach to broad empowerment: granting employees a notional stake in the companies they work for, thereby qualifying them for a 20% share of dividends. This strategy aims to empower workers and promote shared economic growth, ultimately addressing the entrenched inequalities within our society

- **Limit foreign assets exposure by local approved funds**

  The recent increase in the exposure limit for approved funds, from 30% to 45%, has led to a significant outflow of capital from South Africa. While concerns about limited investment options due to delisting on the JSE are valid, it is crucial to redirect more funds towards domestic investments, particularly in our infrastructure projects.

  To achieve this, we recommend a reduction in the exposure limit for foreign assets to 20%. This adjustment will help ensure that a larger portion of funds remains invested in South Africa, fostering economic growth and stability

- **Create 2 million jobs in 2 years**

  While the primary opportunity for job creation lies in creating an investment-friendly environment, the state can also generate up to 2 million jobs within two years by enhancing its capacity to deliver essential government services currently outsourced through tenders, often at inflated costs. Other areas include sectors such as policing, which over time experienced a decrease in the number of police officers per 100,000 citizens.

  Although this approach may facilitate short-term job creation, it is not a sustainable option for accommodating approximately 700,000 new entrants to the job market. Long-term job creation necessitates both an investment-friendly environment and support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

5. Fixing Education and Tra

Among the multitude of interventions that can reshape the trajectory of our country, enhancing the quality of education stands out as the one with the most profound ripple effect. Simultaneously, it's also the most intricate challenge, given its wide systemic nature. This complexity spans from parental involvement and community support to the development of teachers and infrastructure improvements. Education represents our most potent tool for narrowing the persistent economic and social disparities that afflict our society. While it poses a formidable long-term challenge, education offers the best avenue to bridge the social gaps and unlock South Africa's full potential.

Proposals Overview:

- **Cost of education**

  Integrated schools that bring together students from diverse racial backgrounds have the potential to foster enduring unity in South Africa, with children growing, playing, and learning together as a powerful catalyst. To realise this vision of shared education, we advocate for maximum accessibility for as many children as possible.

  To facilitate this, we propose that public school education should be free up to first NQF 7 qualification, equivalent to a Bachelor's degree. In addition, we propose implementing a cap on the cost of basic education in private schools, limiting it to R60,000. This measure aims to make private school education more affordable for more parents, therefore enhancing inclusivity and promoting social cohesion

- **Basic Education Reforms**

  The following are our key basic education reform proposals:

  - **Primary School Transformation**
    Rationalise and consolidate primary schools into a few well resourced hubs with safe transportation for students

  - **Boarding High Schools**
    Change public high school education to boarding system, which will enable providing comprehensive support and facilities to students at the most critical stage of their learning.

  - **Language Standardisation**
    Standardise the medium of instruction to English for Grade 8 across both public and private schools, thereby expanding school options

  - **Pathway Assessment**
    Conduct Grade 8 assessments to determine the most suitable educational path for students (artisan versus academic path).

  - **Modernise Curriculum**
    Revise high school curriculum to address contemporary challenges and opportunities. This includes incorporating personal development components such as critical thinking, financial literacy, self-awareness, teamwork, basic arithmetic, entrepreneurship, self-defense, and driving skills

- **Artisan Training**

  Commencing artisan training from Grade 8 is a critical intervention to prepare students for trade careers. Furthermore, we must establish a network of specialized training institutions that respond to market demand. These institutions should be complemented by robust apprenticeship programs, fostering collaboration with domestic companies and international partners alike. Such a comprehensive approach ensures that our workforce is well-equipped to meet evolving industry needs and global standards.

- **Cultural Education**

  Given South Africa's rich cultural heritage, remarkable diversity, and multitude of languages, we advocate for government funding support (under Social Development) towards cultural education efforts. This sector will encompass a wide array of subjects, including languages, religions, history, and various cultural domains, ensuring that our heritage is preserved, celebrated, and shared.

6. Embracing Digital Evolution

Digital connectivity is the cornerstone of progress in modern society, enabling enhanced education, seamless access to information, efficient public services, and streamlined governance. Failure to embrace the digital era risks isolating our nation on the global stage.

Proposals Overview:

- **Universal Connectivity**

  Access to the digital world is becoming a fundamental right. However, many rural communities still suffer from inadequate connectivity. To address this disparity, we propose a government-funded satellite connectivity initiative. This program would provide free basic data (e.g., 20MB per day) and zero-rated access to online educational and government platforms, ensuring equitable access for all.

- **eGovernment**

  We advocate for the digital transformation of government services, including enhanced identity enrolment and verification (utilizing eye, voice, fingerprint, and digital ID technologies), streamlined licensing procedures, and the introduction of an online voting system.

- **Monetising Government Data**

  Our government possesses a wealth of data that can be harnessed by service providers to develop innovative solutions such as crime alert systems, licensing services, and identity verification platforms.

- **Digital Leadership Agenda**

  South Africa has the potential to become a continental digital hub and pioneer in the integration of artificial intelligence into everyday services, positioning our nation at the forefront of the digital age. But this is not to happen by chance: we need to develop a digital leadership plan, which should also include building and supporting a venture capital community.

- **Technology Education Funding**

  To equip our workforce with the necessary digital skills, we must devise a funding model that extends support to short technology courses, currently excluded from NSFAS, yet offering substantial job opportunities for our present and future generations

- **Internet and data sovereign security**

  We need a clear plan on protecting national sovereignty and continuity given growing dependence on technology both at individuals and organisations level. While social media platforms provide convenience and cloud-computing offers efficiencies, these need to constantly be assessed against national security needs

7. Additional Source of State Funding

To Implement proposals above, we recognise the need for additional funding sources beyond the current state budget.

Proposals Overview:

- **Tax Reforms**

  In order to bolster state revenues, we suggest a series of tax reforms, including:

  - **Increase Corporate Tax to 30%**
    Increase corporate tax rates to ensure corporations contribute more to national development (corporate tax was 50% in 1990..)
  - **Introduction of a New Personal Tax Tier**
    Introduce a new tax tier at 50% marginal tax for individuals earning more than R12 million annually.
  - **Land Tax**
    Introduce a land tax on suboptimal use of commercial land and for residential properties exceeding 5000 square meters.
  - **Combat Tax Leakage**
    Increase focus on reducing tax evasion resulting from illicit financial flows and the smuggling of commodities.

- **Revenue Diversification**

  Exploring new and expanded income opportunities for the state, including:

  - **Government Data Business**
    Monetise government data assets by establishing a data business. Use cases include identity verification, crime hotspots apps, government service request tracking, and many others.
  - **Tourism Development**
    Develop flagship tourism destinations across various regions to showcase the country's natural beauty and cultural diversity. Examples include repurposing Robben Island as a premium entertainment and event destination
  - **Shoreline Property Development**
    Explore shoreline property for development opportunities in prime coastal locations.

- **Infrastructure Investment Fund**

  To meet our infrastructure development needs, we propose the creation of an Infrastructure Investment Fund. This fund would be financed through the following means:

  - **Seed Funding**
    Start with R1 trillion, comprising a R500 billion loan at 5% fixed interest from the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), a R250 billion grant from the Government Employees Pension Fund (GEPF), and a R250 billion proportional bond subscription by other pension funds at a fixed 5% interest rate.
  - **Voluntary Contributions**
    Encourage local and international supporters to make voluntary contributions to the fund.
  - **Minerals Royalties**
    Allocate 5% of minerals royalties to the fund.
  - **Reparations and Compensation**
    Explore reparations and compensation mechanisms for addressing historical injustices and recovering stolen assets.

Funds within the Infrastructure Investment Fund should primarily be allocated to infrastructure projects, and its management should be overseen by a public-private partnership committee under the guidance of the treasury.